

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Sherry Calipa and I am from Danbury CT.

I am writing to you today to express how disappointed I am with Governor Lamont's budget proposal.

These last two years have been very difficult for all of our students, educators, and families. Between the uncertainty of whether we will have a full week of school, the immense loss that so many families are dealing with, and the struggles that have come with all the different kinds of learning, it has been very clear that districts that are adequately funded have always had an advantage whereas districts that are chronically underfunded have always been at a disadvantage. Equitably and immediately fully funding our districts is critical to the success of our students and communities, now more than ever.

At this time, Danbury Public Schools are incredibly overcrowded and adequate resources are not available for all students. Please reconsider funding for this budget at this time. Our children are our only future. We need to teach them so well that our communities will thrive.

Many districts were able to provide additional resources to help cope with the academic and emotional tolls that COVID-19 took on all of our students, teachers, and administrators by using federal COVID relief money. However, those funds are running out, and now districts will no longer be able to keep those services active without additional funds.

Unfortunately, Governor Lamont's proposed budget does not address the importance of continuing to fund our students by fully funding the ECS formula. This would allow school districts to keep offering all the resources that federal ESSER funding allowed them to - and would make the transition off of these funds significantly easier.

I am urging you to reject the governor's proposed budget as it stands and consider the needs of our students as you craft a revised budget. It is past time we put them at the forefront of the conversation.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Sherry Calipa